

# Soul-Winning

## A Problem and Its Solution

By

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With an Introduction by the  
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## INTRODUCTION

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METHODISM is the revivalist of modern times. It came into a group of formal churches. It passed by. The hem of its trailing garments touched the cold, silent forms, and virtue went out into them. They felt a new throb of life and sprang upon their feet and began anew the saving work in the world. Thus the birthright and birthmark of Methodism is revival work.

Methodism as a form of work means the best available method under the circumstances. It is not bound by set forms, but by certain results. It must secure the new life. This life certainly secured is free to make its natural manifestation. Its forms and expressions are as varied as the habits of the peoples and communities touched. It is thus adapted to every grade of culture, from the peasant to the philosopher.

The blind men healed by the Saviour did not say to their fellows, "You are not healed because Jesus did not send you to wash in the pool of Sifoam," nor "because Jesus did not touch your eyes." No, they looked into

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each other's eyes and said, "We see." So in the work of Methodism it does not demand the same form. It asks only, "Do you know God in the pardon of sin?" Its revival work is under one law, namely, divine power working through human agencies, supernatural power working along natural lines.

In earlier days, and in many places now, the revival is reached by a campaign in which the entire community is moved upon by stated and persistent preaching of the gospel. The community is instructed in the doctrines and truths of the gospel, and the church members make special prayer and personal labor among their friends and neighbors. The Spirit of God, always ready to use any and all available means for reaching the unsaved, honors these agencies, and multitudes are brought to the supreme decision and accept God in Christ.

The wide and constant preaching of the Word and the faithful teaching in the Sunday schools seem sometimes to modify these general and sweeping displays of saving grace. People are brought into the new life with less impressive efforts, but not with less certainty. The church passes through changes in her methods and manifestations. But she must

have the same spirit and the same simple and fundamental truths of the gospel, the same absolute surrender to the will of God, and implicit faith in the unbreakable promises of God.

We are in this book introduced to old and yet new and effective methods of work, not superseding the old campaigns, but supplementing them. We see a closer and more personal approach and appeal. It is less the charge of a brigade, and more the careful work of the sharpshooter.

A British officer who was in the battle of New Orleans said that as they neared the American breastworks they saw one man behind a bale of cotton fighting on his own hook. There was a puff of smoke yonder, and by the side of the officer there was an empty saddle. Then the man reloaded his gun, scanned the line a moment, and then another puff of smoke and another empty saddle. He said: "That man commanded my attention more than the whole line of breastworks. It was a great relief when the artillery opened upon us and we were somewhat covered by the smoke of battle." This is the value of this book—to man the works with sharpshooters fighting on their own hook.

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Part III presents the work of soul-winning in illustrative examples, in concrete form. This presents the work in personal appeal. In this individualized age, in which every man stands on his own feet, this method is adapted to the varying conditions of men. It requires courage and consecration to seek interviews with prominent men to urge upon them the claims of the gospel. But this is the work required for the success of the church. Too many of us find it too hard to follow this close method. It is comparatively easy to preach and exhort people who come to the church. The prominent unchurched people are too often allowed to drift without attention. The success set forth in this book presses this important duty upon our ministers. If every minister would follow the plan of work here illustrated and follow it in the spirit of Jesus Christ new power would come to the church. The example and spirit would extend to the laity. They would feel God's claim, and the church would enjoy perpetual revival.

We expect for this direct, straightforward book marked usefulness wherever it is read and applied.

CHARLES H. FOWLER.

# **SOUL-WINNING**

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## **PART I**

### **The Importance of Soul-Winning**

THE writer is a most ardent believer in genuine revivals of religion. Not once has he allowed a single season to pass during a pastorate of fifteen years without putting forth special revival efforts, and his ministry has always been fruitful in revivals, while some mighty spiritual awakenings have stirred the communities where he has labored. But he has never closed a meeting without a sense of defeat because so many of the leading men of the community and congregation were not reached, and in many instances did not attend the services at all during the special meetings. Then, too, the writer came to believe that indiscriminate personal work in the public congregation, which seemed so fruitful a few years ago, had in many communities not only lost its power, but had become a positive

hindrance and embarrassment to revival work. He was tempted to import a "professional" evangelist in order that *he* might attract the unsaved masses, and especially the unsaved business men, to the revival; but then he could not resist the feeling that God had called him to be a soul-winner, and that he must inaugurate methods which would be effective in winning men. What earnest pastor has not felt a sense of defeat in revival effort, and wept over the "desolations of Zion," and cried out in the language of the psalmist, "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psa. 85. 6)—or with the prophet, "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy" (Hab. 3. 2)? And yet the multitudes have not been saved.

"Forward movements" have not met the demands of the hour. The Twentieth Century Thank Offering Movement was a financial success. A sum exceeding twenty million dollars was placed in the lap of the church, and used in the liquidation of debts and for other specified objects. There were also "gracious revivals and numerous conversions in many parts of the country, but we must

admit with heart-searching and humiliation that no such general, widespread, and continuous spiritual quickening of the church at large as had been hoped for was realized." But the demand is still upon us for some general movement which will be successful in a most vital and important sense in winning to Christ those whom the ordinary revival fails to reach. In recognition of this demand the Gideons, a traveling men's organization, and the Brotherhood of Saint Paul, and various other organizations, have sprung into existence, all of which have been blessed of God in a greater or less degree, but none of which seems to adequately meet the demand that confronts the church. In the writer's opinion it is not *more organizations* that we need, but more practical personal work which will result in the salvation of men, not *en masse*, but one by one. In this little work we hope to be able to suggest how every child of God may become a fruit-bearer and thus measure up to Christ's ideal of the Christian life.



## PART II

### Personal Effort in Soul-Winning

PERSONAL effort was Christ's method and has had the stamp of the apostolic seal upon it, as well as the approval of all successful soul-winners during the entire Christian dispensation. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19. 10). He came not only to save, but to *seek*, the lost. He sat at the well and conversed with a woman whose life was not very clean, but in that apparently simple interview he laid bare her sins and she soon went forth to tell the Samaritans what she had seen and heard, saying, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John 4. 29.) Lost men and women do not seek Christ till he first seeks them. Those lost and steeped in sin are the burden of his sympathetic heart. It was for them that he left his throne, assumed the robe of flesh, and suffered unto death upon the cross. He said of himself, "For I am not come to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance" (Matt. 9. 13). "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one *sinner* that

repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15. 7). He called, equipped, and commissioned his disciples and church to prosecute the work he began. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "And the lord said unto his servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." In the words of the late Dr. J. O. Peck, "We are charged with the same commission and are impelled to the same work; we are to seek the lost. We deny Christ as our Master when we wait for them to seek us. This is the only way to solve the tremendous problem of reaching the multitudes continually perishing under the very shadows of our churches." The disciples of the Lord Jesus stamped personal effort in soul-winning with their approval in their own efforts to win followers to their Lord and Master. "One of the two which heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus." This method was practiced by Paul. He won Timothy and ever after reckoned him as a trophy of divine grace.

and a son in the gospel. Personal effort has the approval of those who have been preëminently successful as soul-winners. Mr. D. L. Moody, who was noted for the elaborate preparation, the great choruses and choirs, and who won many signal victories on both sides of the Atlantic, where thousands of precious souls were influenced by him to make their peace through Christ, notwithstanding he came forth from so many battlefields with victory perched upon his banner, lived to see the day when he confessed that, "After all, the most effective and fruitful work of grace can only be secured by the consecration of the great masses of our membership to reach the people one by one." He expressed the ardent hope that he might be permitted to live to send out from his schools a multitude of young men and women all on fire with zeal for Christ, to give themselves as personal workers in soul-winning. The best and most efficient service that can possibly be rendered is that which brings us in contact with the unsaved personally, as we strive to lead them to Christ one by one. Thousands may be thus saved who would otherwise go out into eternity without "hope in God and the world to come."

## PART III

### A Successful Method

CALL on men in their places of business, and thus come in touch with them socially. During the earlier years of the writer's ministry our calling was limited chiefly to the homes of the people. We usually called in the afternoon, when neither men nor children were at home, the men being at the shop, store, or office, while the children were in school. Later we changed this plan and made as many calls as possible in the evening, and still later we took a list of the names of men and called on them at their places of business. After cultivating them for a short time socially and manifesting an interest in them, we have asked them boldly why they were not members of the church. Of course, we would receive various replies, the most frequent answer being, "I scarcely know—carelessness, I suppose." Then we have been careful to suggest to the man, so no one else would hear it, "Will you allow me to come to your home and have a talk with you about your

spiritual condition?" We never make this request in the presence of another, or so another can possibly hear it. Men are so sensitive that they will resent the slightest publicity connected with such effort. We have called men aside from the desk and counter and then quietly made the request. They always appreciate this delicate method of approach. Make the calls on business men exceedingly brief. They are busy. Many of them are employees whose time belongs to another. We have made an engagement for a private interview without taking two minutes' time in the office or store. We have always been careful to emphasize the purpose for which the call was to be made, for two reasons: (1) That the man would be studying about his spiritual condition and in a sense prepared for the interview; (2) That he would not resent the effort to be put forth in his spiritual interest.

*Preparation for the Interview.* If the meeting is to be at the home of the man, see the wife or mother in advance, and tell her that you are to call on the husband or son and would like to have a private talk with him. Personal workers should learn all they can in advance about the individual. The

pastor may often gain much valuable information from some discreet church member as to his views, prejudices, etc. It will frequently be necessary to see a wife, sister, or friend.

*The Call Itself.* Earnestness should be a dominant characteristic of the personal worker at the very inception of the interview. We presume almost every personal worker has been at a loss to know how to begin. It has been our method to induce the man to talk on some subject of mutual interest, if possible, but especially some subject with which he himself is entirely conversant, and then finally to suggest, "I appreciate the privilege of this hour, and hope the greatest good may grow out of it." Then we have said, "You believe in the Bible and Christianity?" If he acknowledges that he does, "You therefore recognize the importance of having a change of heart, of being converted?" If once more he assents, we have said, "If I can point out the way, and indicate the steps which must be taken in order to become a Christian, and if these steps should be based on common sense as well as the Word of God, and if they appeal to your reason, and appear to you to be feasible, would you be willing to take the steps

which will lead you to a satisfactory solution of the problem of your personal salvation and of your personal relationship to God?" Men often hesitate, but we invariably hold them to this proposition.

The success of the interview hinges upon two things, namely: a personal commitment to a belief in God's Word, and a willingness to take the steps when the way is made plain.

*Clearing Away the Rubbish.* Often an entire interview will be spent in clearing away the rubbish which must be gotten rid of or the effort cannot but prove abortive. We remember a most vivid illustration of this fact: In the town of C. the writer was told that the banker was one of the most influential men in the village, and if he could be induced to give himself to Christ no doubt he would bring many to the Lord through his influence; but our informant added, "He is an infidel, and I fear that he is a hopeless case."

We went to the bank and visited for a few moments twice, and then we said, "Mr. A., I would like to see you outside of business hours and talk to you about your spiritual condition."

He blushed like a maiden, and replied: "All right; we have supper at six o'clock. Come

over at six-thirty. I would like to have a talk with you."

Promptly at the hour appointed we were there, for we have always been scrupulous in being exactly on time. He introduced the subject himself; addressing us, he said: "I don't want to take any advantage of you, so I will be perfectly frank with you. I do not believe the Bible. I believe parts of it, it is true, but there are portions of it which I do not believe and have not from boyhood."

We replied: "I am glad to see you thus frank, and I will be just as honest with you. Please state your objections, and if I cannot answer them I will acknowledge plainly that I cannot."

He was a bright, keen, wide-awake business man, a little past middle life. He had had college advantages, and was very successful in business, and to say we dreaded the interview is putting it mildly; but we breathed a prayer for divine help. The questions he asked did not indicate that he wanted to provoke an argument, nor did they make him appear to be an opponent and enemy of God's Word, but they seemed to emanate from the heart of an honest "doubting Thomas" to whom many things in the Bible appeared to be unreal.

and fanciful. We answered the questions the best we could, and met the objections made against divine revelation by appealing to what had been accomplished by the preaching of the gospel of the cross. We remembered the Master's admonition, "Believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very work's sake."

At the close of the hour's siege the privilege was asked of praying with him and his family. His wife, although a member of a ritualistic church, and he himself, who had not been reared under Methodist influences, very cordially granted our request. After prayer he said, with marked evidences of deep concern, "I have never seen things as I do to-night. If it would not be too much trouble I would like to have you come and have another talk with me."

We said, "All right; suppose I come to-morrow evening at the same hour."

That time being agreed upon, we took leave of him and departed for the church, for special services were in progress.

At the meeting on the second evening more questions were asked, some of which were most difficult and showed that he was determined not to surrender his infidelity without contest-

ing every inch of the ground. At the close of the conversation, which lasted for an hour and a half, we again asked permission to pray. (The devil can stand lots of talk,

"But Satan trembles when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees.")

The prayer being ended, he grasped us by the hand and said, "Mr. Carroll, I am forty-four years old, and I declare I never saw this matter in the light that I do to-night."

Our reply was, "I would advise you to join the Methodist Church next Sunday morning on probation, conversion or no conversion. This suggestion is made because neither of the churches in which you and your wife were brought up is here."

He replied, "I will make you no promises."

"I am not anxious to evoke a promise from you, but I am anxious for you to surrender to Christ, and I believe this to be a step in the direction of salvation. For if you join the church on probation, long before the six months shall have expired you will be rejoicing in the consciousness of sins forgiven. If you do not walk in the light you now have, I fear that you may never have as much light again in which to walk; for, Mr. A., I am

leaving you to-night with the feeling that unless you yield to Christ at this time you are nearer the kingdom than you will ever be again."

He said, "That may be true."

*The Results.* On Sunday morning we preached from the text, "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26. 28), using as a theme, "A Crisis in Human Life." Of course, we made the strongest appeal we could, having that brother in mind. At the close of the discourse, in response to an invitation, the man, his wife and daughter, and twenty others, including two merchants and their wives, came to the altar and joined the church, and with the tears running down his face Mr. A. surrendered to Christ that morning, and established the family altar that night. He is now one of the leading official members in that church. His influence did tell for Christ, for in that revival campaign between forty and fifty souls accepted Christ and united with the church.

## PART IV

### Steps Leading to Christ

THERE are four steps which lead to Christ. Every student of theology is familiar with them. But to get these steps reduced to a workable plan, so that we can sit down with an honest, earnest man who has not yet accepted Christ, and explain the way so that he will make an unconditional surrender of himself to his Saviour, is quite another thing. In our personal work, when we have come to the private interview, and the man has committed himself to a belief in God's Word, we have said frankly, "The very Word in which you profess to believe condemns you." Then we take the Testament and base the instruction on "Thus saith the Lord," saying, "Since, therefore, the Bible condemns us, is it not of first importance that we take the steps which lead us out of condemnation into a position of life and safety?" The man will usually say, "Yes, that would seem to be the only intelligent course to pursue." Then we say, "If you would like to have me, I will define the steps

which every one of us must take in becoming a Christian, in definitely accepting Christ as our personal Saviour." We wait for a request to advance, so that he will feel that we respect his wishes in the matter and are not disposed to intrude our services upon him.

*Salvation Steps:* 1. Conviction. 2. Contrition. 3. Conversion. 4. Confession.

These steps must not only be explained and their importance proved by the Word of God, but we must emphasize the importance of taking them and doing it *now*. To explain these steps so as to influence a man to take them, one must have his Testament well in hand so that he can turn to and read the passages readily. It is better to read the passages from the Word than to quote from memory. If one quotes from memory he might arouse in the seeker a suspicion that the quotation was not correct. Then, too, we have had men say to us, when we have read certain scriptures, "Where is that? I did not know that that was in the Bible. Let me read it." So that we are thoroughly convinced that the reading of the Word is far better than quoting it.

In a Western city there lived a Mr. B., whose wife was a member of our church and

a most consistent and consecrated Christian. She said to us, soon after we entered upon the work in that charge, "My husband is not a Christian. He is a good moral man, but has not been converted. I want you to seek an opportunity to see him and have a talk with him, for I feel that he is to be saved under your personal influence; for he has heard you preach and was favorably impressed."

He was a commercial traveler, and was only at home from Friday evening till Monday morning. We had not seen him to know him, but one Friday evening we went to his home and met him. After a brief social chat we casually remarked, "Mr. B., I have wondered why you do not belong to the church, with your wife and son."

He said: "I don't know, sir, that I am fit for church membership. I do not know that I have been converted, that I have had a change of heart. I was brought up in a ritualistic church and confirmed in it at the age of fourteen, and I am now fifty-five years old, and I do not know that I have ever been converted."

We hastened to reply, "Mr. B., you may be converted and know it."

He said, "Well, that might be."

We said, "It *will* be if you determine that

it *shall* be. Suppose I come over to-morrow afternoon and that we have a talk about your spiritual condition."

He said, "I don't know."

We asked him if he knew a certain business man who had been converted through our personal efforts in a quiet way at his home. His reply was, "Yes, I know him very well."

We then explained briefly how that man came to accept Christ, and he said, almost abruptly, "You come to-morrow afternoon at two-thirty."

We bade him good-night, and two-thirty the next afternoon found us in his parlor. We had spent considerable time in prayer and meditation, feeling that a real conflict was in waiting. We asked him to tell us about his business, and he told us that he had been a traveling salesman for the company for which he was then working for the last twenty-five years, having spent most of his life since he was mustered out of the Union army at the close of the civil war in their employ. We said, "I have been intensely interested in these reminiscences, and you could teach me much about the hardware business, but I think I know a little more about the matter of salvation than you do; and now, since you have

kindly granted this personal interview, I hope to be able to help you. Do you believe the Bible?"

He said, "I do, every word of it."

"Then, of course, you believe that we must be born again if we would be saved?"

"Yes, but that is a matter that has given me much concern. I have lived a moral life and tried to treat my fellow men as I would have them treat me, and I can hardly realize that I am in the same category with the vile and outbreaking sinner."

"I replied: "That is a common experience with men like yourself, whose morality is unquestionable, and whose outward life is exemplary. But Paul says, 'There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' " I turned to Rom. 3. 22, 23, and read this scripture to him, and said: "I am not surprised to find you in this attitude, for, as Dr. Wilbur Chapman has affirmed, men like yourself will say, 'What! no difference between the man who has fallen to the lowest depths of sin and wretchedness and the man who has only swerved a little from the path of duty and the law of God? There is a difference in heinousness and degradation, wide as the poles, but no difference as far as guilt

is concerned, for both have rejected the Son of God, and this is the *sin of sins.*' You, no doubt, are ready to confess that you have, despite your morality, fallen short many times, and actually sinned against God."

"O, yes, I would not deny that," he replied.

"Well, then, you need to repent of your sins as though you were the most vile and out-breaking sinner."

It is hard for us to be thus honest with unconverted men when we are brought face to face with them. It is easy enough to preach to people about sin and repentance, but quite a different task to say, as Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man." But business men resent any other method. To tell them that all they need to do is to come into the church is to repulse them, for they feel that merely joining the church has no power to free the soul from guilt and cleanse the heart from sin. Therefore to invite a man to unite with the church without conversion, unless it be into a preparatory membership which will strengthen his desire for salvation and intensify his desire to seek Christ, is to shirk the responsibility of leading men to Jesus, and to become traitors to Christ and his cause.

Then we called his attention to Nicodemus,

who came to Jesus by night, and reminded him of how Christ told Nicodemus that in spite of his morality he must be born again. Then we said:

"Let us examine these steps, which if taken will lead us to Christ. Notice the first step—conviction. Conviction, Mr. B., differs in different persons. A vile, desperate character, one who has committed some flagrant sin, would in all probability be almost overwhelmed with condemnation; but with the moral man, the man who has respect for the laws of God and man, conviction would manifest itself in the form of desire. Two illustrations are recorded in God's Word. The first is conviction of the overwhelming type David had taken Uriah's wife, and to cover his sin had caused his faithful official to be placed in a most dangerous position in the army where he was killed; and then seemed to be oblivious to his double crime of adultery and murder until God, through his prophet Nathan, aroused his conscience. Then David went out and wept bitterly, and said, 'Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest' (Psa. 51. 4). To Nicodemus conviction came

in the form of a desire. The whole story as recorded in the third chapter of John shows that he was a practical man of affairs and came to Jesus at night and sought a private, uninterrupted interview with him. The Master, notwithstanding Nicodemus was a member of the Jewish church and a leading official in the Jewish Sanhedrin, told him plainly that he must be born again. 'Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Then Christ unfolded the plan of salvation to his mind, and Nicodemus finally accepted Jesus and became his open and avowed disciple.

"The second step leading to Christ, Mr. B., is contrition. Contrition is deep sorrow and self-condemnation, with thorough repentance for sin because it is displeasing to God. It implies a feeling of love for God. It also implies self-abnegation. No man can believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation until he renounces self. You remember Jesus gives this command, which is recorded in Luke 9. 23: 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.' This includes the moral man as well as the outbreaking sinner.

"A record is given us of a self-righteous man and one who was thoroughly contrite, both of whom approached God in prayer. This account is left us, I am sure, that we may make no mistake in our approach to God." Turning to Luke, eighteenth chapter, we read from verses 9 to 14: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, did not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Then was described the nature of genuine repentance in a few pregnant words, remembering John Wesley's definition: "By repentance I mean the conviction of sin, producing

real desires and sincere resolutions of amendment. True repentance is a grace of the Holy Spirit, whereby a sinner, from a sense of his sins, an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth with grief and hatred of his sins turn from them to God with full purpose of, and endeavors after, future obedience."

Luke gives us an illustration of genuine repentance in the case of Peter after his denial of Christ. "The cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly."

We said further: "Godly sorrow arises especially from the view of sin in its relation to God." An illustration was given. "Here is a petty thief, detected and arrested for stealing. He seems penitent. He weeps and evinces great anguish of soul. He evokes our sympathy, and we come to the conclusion that if the 'poor fellow' was released he would resist future temptations and live an honest life. But his subsequent conduct convinces us that our faith was not well founded. For after serving his term in prison, and receiving his liberty, he repeats the offense against the

law of the land. His sorrow was a worldly sorrow. He was sorry because he was apprehended, and, if he was not a hardened criminal, he was sorry that he had disgraced himself and his friends, but not sorry that he had committed an offense against society and broken God's law, for he repeats the crime." But a godly sorrow is so deep and pungent that it causes us to loathe sin, renounce it, and turn away from it. The sin we recognize to have been committed against God. His law has been violated. He has been offended. Upon this point the attention has been fixed with absorbing and overpowering interest, and from that arises the depth and pungency of the sorrow. The soul with a sense of its loss turns to God with humble confession.

The following examples taken from the Word of God will always give emphasis to such an interview: "For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thess. 1. 9). This kind of sorrow is characterized by humble confession: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make

him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1. 9, 10).

The Rev. Benjamin Field says: "The sorrow of the world may involve the deepest regret for having sinned, but has none of the elements of repentance mentioned above. It terminates on the world and may be produced by the mere dread of punishment, or by the mere shame of detection, or by the loss and suffering and disrepute which the sin has occasioned. Hence if the sin be forsaken it is not because there is any deep sense of its intrinsic evil in the sight of God. There is no apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, no real hearty turning to God, remorse, shame, fear; these are the emotions that stir within, and, as in the case of Judas and many, many more, such sorrow worketh death by producing the horrors of despair or the guilt of suicide."

The personal worker cannot insist too strongly on a genuine repentance, nor be too careful in explaining its nature. To fail here is to fail in all worlds. Success here means success everywhere. It is to be feared that many people come into the church without genuine repentance, and that they soon subside into unthinking believers who fill all our

churches, having a name to live, but are dead. By taking due care to safeguard men at this point we will build up a strong, spiritual church, which will be dead to sin and alive unto righteousness. Every Christian worker will find it hard to lead men to the cross through the door of repentance, as we experienced with the brother in question, but there is no other way. It was the Master himself who said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber" (John 10. 1).

Self-renunciation confronts the unregenerate at the very threshold of salvation, and, to adopt the language of the late Bishop Clark, "Perhaps there is not one of more difficult performance or one more repugnant to the unrenewed heart. If gold could purchase religion, thousands would pay the price. If long and toilsome pilgrimages were enjoined, how cheerfully they would be undertaken! But to come as a condemned and wretched sinner, to *know* and to *feel* his own vileness and to realize himself to be without merit, without claim! to have the heart wrung with penitential agony as he looks to Christ and cries out, 'Other refuge have I none, hangs my help-

less soul on thee,' this is the difficult self-denial that brings us to the cross!" Herein lies a danger in personal evangelism. We may by the might of personal contact and the eloquence of heart appeal persuade men to unite with us in church fellowship; but as a true mother would be faithful to her infant in its helplessness, and as a conscientious teacher would deal honestly with his pupils, so must the personal worker be true to Christ and his fellow men in dealing with immortal souls.

The third step which leads to Christ is conversion. About the word "conversion" great mysteries have clustered, and the unregenerate dread to approach it. This we frankly conceded, but we said: "Mr. B., let us look into the Word of God and see what conversion means. Theologians tell us that conversion is a spiritual and moral change attending a change of belief with conviction; a change of heart; an exchange of the service of the world for the service of God; a change of the ruling disposition of the soul, involving a transformation of the heart and life. This word 'conversion' has given us no little trouble. When I was a child no one so explained it to me that my child mind could grasp it. When I sought Christ my instructors said,

'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' That was just what I was most anxious to do, but conversion confronted me with its unlimited mysteries, and no one thought to tell me what it meant. The fault was with my instructors, for Paul has made the matter exceedingly explicit."

We read Romans, twelfth chapter and second verse: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Then was emphasized the fact that conversion, about which so much of mystery has clustered, is the renewing of the mind. In an unconverted state we are conformed to this world. Our pleasures are extracted from it; we are worldly in our aspirations and conform to this world in our endeavors; but when we make up our minds to serve God at any and every possible sacrifice we are no longer conformed to this world, but we are transformed because our mind is renewed, for we have determined by the grace of God to live a Christian life.

Paul enlightens us still further on this subject in his letter to the Ephesians (4. 22-24): "That ye put off concerning the former con-

versation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts ; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind ; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

We affirmed that when one is renewed in the spirit of his mind he is converted. He is a new creature. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5. 17). Everyone in this position stands in the sight of God as justified. This condition was fully explained. To quote the Rev. Benjamin Field once more, "To justify a person is a law phrase denoting the action of a judge who after a fair legal trial declares a man innocent who was accused at his bar and acquits him by a sentence pronounced in the hearing of the accuser and the witnesses." The man passes out of the court, free from all blame. The accusation has fallen to the ground. He is justified in the legal, proper sense of the term. *Evangelical justification* has to do with a man as guilty and ungodly. He is a convicted offender; a pardon, however, is granted which destroys the connection between his conduct and its consequences. This is justification

improper or secondary, and is the general meaning of the word as used in the epistles of Saint Paul. Hence the definition, "Justification is an act of God's free grace wherein he pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in his sight only for the sake of Christ;" and the fuller definition of John Wesley, "The plain scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins. It is that act of God the Father whereby, for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of his Son, he sheweth forth his righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of the sins that are passed."

While it would be impossible to enter into as lengthy an explanation of justification as the above definitions would involve, nevertheless a full explanation of the justified state and the steps leading to it must be made if we would lead men intelligently. It is the custom of the writer to be most explicit at this point, meeting all possible opposition by the Word of God. We called Mr. B.'s attention to the words of the inspired writers: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from

which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13. 38, 39). "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. 4. 5-8).

Confession is the last step which leads to Christ. We said once more: "Mr. B., the fourth step which brings us to Christ is confession. I will not ask you to believe what I might say on the subject, for infinitely too much is at stake to depend upon what *any* man might say. Let us once more turn to the New Testament and see what God says. In Romans, tenth chapter, ninth to thirteenth verses, we read, 'That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.'

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' "

But we saw that our brother seemed mystified and unwilling to take the steps indicated; and we tried to emphasize the love of God, and enlarged on the simplicity of the plan of salvation. We suggested to him that God in his Word has illustrated his love for us so that we would be glad to confess him. The psalmist proclaims both his love and pity for us: "Like as a father pitith his children, so the Lord pitith them that fear him." We appealed to him as a father: "You know how you pity your little boy or girl when they have done wrong. You pity them while they may be stubborn and rebellious; but you do not forgive them until they confess their fault and ask forgiveness. For you know as a father that if you were to grant your parental pardon and imprint the kiss of forgiveness while the child is disobedient and rebellious you would be untrue to your child and would be indulging it in a course of waywardness which would end in destruction; and even though your very heart would be almost breaking in your anxi-

ety to forgive, for the child's sake you would wait for a confession. God deals with us in the same way. It was Jesus who said, 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' I am so glad that in coming to God through Christ we do not have to do great things nor possess great knowledge; but we have simply to be obedient and comply with the reasonable conditions. God speaks to us through our children."

In spite of the complete revelation that God has made of his love to us, when our natures are incrusted by sin, we doubt the love of God, and are not willing to trust him implicitly for salvation. In personal work for the Master we come to the place where we are afraid to make the final appeal to the unsaved lest they reject it, and the effort is blasted. We came to this point with Mr. B., and before making the appeal upon which we had based everything we ventured another illustration of God's love. We used the one Dr. Louis Albert Banks gives us in one of his sermons, which it seems to us not only perfectly illustrates the love of God, but also the ease with which we may be saved.

"In the summer of 1857 a student in a New England college, a very bright young man, was to have graduated with honors, but by some deviation from the rules of the school his record was impaired. His father, in his disappointment in his son, rebuked him, in a way which angered the young man, and he vowed he would live at home no longer, and uttering abusive language he left the house. But his better nature soon reasserted itself, and he came back to the room he had so rudely left, and, throwing his arms around his father's neck, said: 'Father, I have done a very wicked thing. I am very sorry that I have abused you so. Can you forgive me? I shall never again do such a thing.' The father's quick embrace and tender words removed the agony of guilt from his broken heart, and there was never after that an unkind word between them. Several years passed away. The young man had gone to the front as a volunteer, and as colonel of his regiment was wounded at Gettysburg, and on the sixteenth day afterward his father found him. Gangrene had followed the amputation of the right limb just below the knee, and had nearly reached the fatal death-mark. He was given up to die. There was no hope remaining. Life was nearly

gone. The embrace he gave his father was feeble. His voice was that of one about to give up life: 'Dear father, how glad I am to see you once more, but you must do the talking now. I am almost gone.'

"Returning from a short walk with the surgeon, the father was asked by the colonel:

"Have you been talking with the surgeon?"

"Yes."

"What did he say about me?"

"He says you must die."

"How long does he think I can live?"

"Not more than four days, and you may go at any moment."

"Father, you must not let me die now. I am afraid to die." I am not prepared to die. If I must, do tell me how. I know you can, for I have heard you do it for others.'

"The father's heart was breaking, but this was no time or place for tears. There was work to be done, and done at once. There was no hesitation. Instantly the Holy Spirit said to the father, 'Tell him of the school incident. That is what he wants; I have held it in reserve for this moment.'

"My son, you feel guilty, do you not?"

"Yes. That makes me afraid to die."

"You want to be forgiven, don't you?"

"Yes. Can I be?"

"Certainly."

"Can I know it before I die?"

"Certainly."

"Do make this so plain that I can get hold of it," and he raised his feeble arm and closed his hand as if to grasp it.

"Do you remember the school incident years ago?"

"Yes, very distinctly. I was thinking it all over a few days ago, as I thought of your coming."

"Do you remember how you came back into the house and, throwing your arms around my neck, asked me to forgive you?"

"Yes."

"What did I say to you?"

"You said, "I forgive you with all my heart," and kissed me."

"Did you believe me?"

"Certainly. I never doubted your word."

"Did that take away your sense of guilt?"

"Yes."

"All of it?"

"Yes."

"Were you happy at home after that?"

"Yes. It seemed to me more than ever before."

"This is just the thing for you to do now. Tell Jesus you are sorry you have abused him, and ask him to forgive you just as simply and sincerely as you did me. He says he will forgive, and you must take his word for it, just as you did mine."

"Why, father, is that the way to become a Christian?"

"I don't know of any other."

"That is very simple and plain. I can get hold of that."

"Very much exhausted by this effort, the colonel turned his head upon his pillow to rest. The father, having done all he could for his dying son, sank into a chair and gave way to a flow of tears, expecting soon to close his son's eyes in death. But that painful suspense did not last long. A change had taken place. A new life had come to that soul. Its first utterance changed the tears to joy.

"Father, you need not cry any more. I don't want you should. I want you should sing. It's all right with me now; I am happy; Jesus has forgiven me; I have told him how sorry I am that I have abused him so. He has forgiven me; I know he has, for he says he will, and I have taken his word for it just as I did yours. I am not afraid to die now;

but I don't think I shall; I feel the stirring of a new life within me, and with it comes a feeling of a new life in my blood. I want you to sing that good old hymn we used to sing when I was a boy, at family prayers:

"When I can read my title clear  
To mansions in the skies,  
I bid farewell to every fear,  
And wipe my weeping eyes."

"Immediately the life-current which was rapidly ebbing away began to flow back; the pulse beating at the death-rate began to lessen, the eyes to brighten, the countenance to glow with new blood, the voice to sound more natural, the sadness to give place to cheerfulness and hope. The surgeon coming in, as was his custom every day, to watch the rapid progress of the dreaded gangrene, put his fingers upon the pulse, and said with great surprise: 'Colonel, your pulse is wonderfully changed; you look better. What has happened?'

"'Well,' replied the colonel, 'father has shown me how to be a Christian, and I have done it. I am better; I am going to get well.'

"And, sure enough, the new life in his heart somehow or other put new strength into his

body, and he still lives a useful and noble Christian life."

When we repeated this story to Mr. B. we said: "Dr. Banks vouches for this as being absolutely true, and I have related it to you to show how easy it is for you to yield yourself to Christ. Mr. B., we have come to the end of our strength. I have tried to make these steps plain. Do they appeal to you? Are you willing to take these steps now?"

He straightened himself up and was greatly agitated, and said with a great deal of severity in his tone, "Young man, I am several years older than you, and I am not going to be crowded."

I replied very calmly: "Mr. B., I feel almost aggrieved, for I have come into your home upon your invitation, at the hour appointed by yourself, to talk to you about your spiritual condition, and I have based all I have said to you on the Word of God, and have tried exceedingly hard to help you, and now you insinuate that I have intruded on you in your own home, and trespassed on your hospitality."

He replied, still greatly wrought up, and harsh in his tone: "I hardly meant that. But I want some time to study these points you have brought out. I will not be crowded."

I said, again maintaining my calmness: "You have had fifty-five years of life, and if you could have studied or reasoned your way to Christ you would have been saved ere this. But, Mr. B., you can't come to Christ through that medium. There is but one door, and that is repentance, and unless you take these steps I have indicated you will never be saved."

He had risen from his chair, and was pacing the room, greatly disturbed. Finally he said, "I will call Mrs. B. in, and you can pray before you go."

In a moment his wife was in the room—(she had been in an adjoining room praying during the entire interview, as she told me later—but before praying I turned and read some of the most hopeful and reassuring promises, and then said: "Mr. B., your wife has no doubt prayed for you many times, and now I am going to try to pray for you, but before we pray I want you to promise me that you will pray for yourself. Pray for two things—conversion and the consciousness of sins forgiven. Will you do it?"

I waited for a reply. I know God was present. I never felt more conscious of his presence in my life, and I was determined to press the battle to the very gates" for that

one precious soul. Finally he replied, very earnestly, "Yes, I will."

We went onto our knees before God, and as we prayed I heard him sobbing. The great deep of his heart was broken and the fountain of his tears began to flow, and when the prayer was ended he arose with a shout of victory and embraced his wife and said: "My dear, I've surrendered! I've surrendered! My soul is saved! Glory to God! I have surrendered!"

There is no joy known to human hearts so splendid and inspiring, and which so completely breaks down all restraints, as the joy of a heart in its first gladness in coming to Christ and in having the knowledge of sins forgiven.

William Morley Punshon, the celebrated English preacher, said: "There was joy in the heart of the sage at Syracuse when he shouted aloud his glad 'Eureka!' in the hearing of the people who deemed him mad; there was joy in the soul of Sir Isaac Newton when the first conception of the law of gravitation burst on his thought as he sat under his orchard tree; there was joy in the heart of Columbus in that moment of triumph over doubt and mutiny when the tiny land birds settled upon the sail of his vessel, bearing upon their timid

wings the welcomes of the new world. There is joy for the gold-finder when he sees the precious ore shine in his gold-pan; joy for children when new marvels of the world open on their vision; joy for the poet when he sends a glad thought through the world that stirs the pulse of mankind; but none of these can compare with the joy of the ransomed sinner who can clasp his brother's hand and say, 'Come, brother, we have found the Lord.'"

Reader, if you have never known that joy, then the greatest happiness is in reservation for you. Won't you begin now to seek it?

"Do the nearest duty,  
Grateful that your hand  
May do the work that angels  
Never could have planned.  
So shall love eternal  
Into life be wrought,  
And blessings spring from  
E'en your humblest thought."

We left our brother and his companion to rejoice alone, feeling that the scene was too precious for any except God and the angels to look upon; but we departed knowing that the joy-bells of heaven had rung in glad acclaim over another sinner that had repented. "I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in

heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance."

The next morning (Sabbath) Mr. B. came to the church with his family, and when the opportunity was given he came forward, giving his name to the church, and as he extended his hand to me he said, "Brother Carroll, my soul is so happy!" He not only lived a consistent, but a most enthusiastic, Christian. It was his delight to tell his business companions what the Lord had done for him. He did not come to Christ any too soon, for eighteen months from the date of his conversion, while standing at his desk, his heart ceased to beat, and he went to his crowning.

#### THE CONVERSION OF A MORALIST WHO DOUBTED THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

In a recent pastorate, when the writer was pastor of a church with a membership of five hundred and fifty, and was therefore exceedingly busy, he became interested in a Mr. C., who was between forty-five and fifty years old. He was a government employee with a force of more than one hundred men under his supervision. His wife, while a Christian and a

member of our church, was not spiritually active. The man was so busy that it was difficult to detain him in conversation during business hours; but his wife being one of our members, and he occasionally attending our services, placed us under special obligations to him, and we felt that we must seek an interview. He was a great reader, very bright but a quiet and reserved man, so that altogether it seemed very difficult to approach him; and while we thought of him often during the first year of our pastorate in that charge it was not until the second year's work was well under way that we found the grace and courage to broach to him the subject of his personal relationship to God. Despite the fact that he was rushed with business, we felt that, being his wife's pastor, a call would be in good taste. So we called two or three times, and then with a spirit of fear we ventured to ask him why he was not a Christian. He replied: "I hardly know—carelessness, I guess. My father and mother were professed Christians and members of the Methodist Church, and I really think they were conscientious Christians; but," he said, "to be frank with you, there are some things in my way."

We replied, "Allow me to come to your

home and have a private interview with you about your spiritual condition."

"All right, if I can learn anything I like to talk with men."

The evening was agreed upon, and when the time came we soon found that his chief trouble was that he doubted the divinity of Christ. One of the first questions he asked us was, "Can't a man pray to God the Father, leaving Christ out of the business, and be saved?"

Our reply was: "No. If Jesus is not divine, neither the Old nor the New Testament can possibly be true, for the Old Testament foretold in prophecy his coming, and the New Testament is a fulfillment of the Old; so that if Jesus is not divine we would have to reject both the Old and the New Testaments. Do you believe in the Bible?"

"Yes, I do not want you to think that I am not orthodox, but there are some mysteries which seem incredible."

"Since you believe the Bible, you must know that you cannot be saved without Christ's atoning blood being applied to your heart, for in Acts 4. 12 we read, 'Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' "

He said, "I do not understand the Trinity."

"Neither do I fully understand it, but I believe it."

I then called his attention to comparative religions, and asked him to contrast the influences exerted by Christianity—where the Lord Jesus Christ is recognized as being not only the Son of Mary but the Son of God, not only human but divine—and those exerted by heathen religions.

We said, "When you consider the elevating and ameliorating effects of Christianity is it not harder to disbelieve the divinity of Christ, granting that there are some mysteries, than it is to believe in him despite the mysteries?"

He acknowledged that the points were well taken, and the doctrines of the Holy Trinity and Christ's divinity must be true, or Christianity would not have wielded such a tremendous power in the world.

We evoked from him a promise that he would attend church the next Sunday morning. He kept his word, and our discourse that morning was an appeal to business men. At night we spoke on the atonement in Christ, using Acts 4. 12 as a text. We did not see him again for a whole week. On Saturday evening we telephoned him and told him the

nature of the services which would be had in our church the next day. He said, "I will be there at both services."

On that Sabbath we had the communion in the morning. In the evening we emphasized repentance, and the relation each man sustains to his own salvation, and the part he must perform if he would be saved. The next morning I called at Mr. C.'s office, and he grasped me by the hand and said: "I am glad to see you; I am exceedingly glad I heard you last night. That discourse convinces me that if a man would be saved, he has something to do in the transaction."

I said: "That is certainly so, Mr. C. Suppose we have another interview at your home some night this week."

He said: "I shall be glad to. Thursday night will suit me best."

Dear reader, don't imagine that the victory was already won. I can assure you that a tremendous battle against doubt and sin was in waiting. The call was to be made at 7:30 in the evening. I went at that hour and saw the family at dinner, so walked several blocks before appearing at the door. The task was so great that it seemed at one time as if my heart would fail me. I almost regretted hav-

ing made the engagement. I do not remember ever dreading to appear before a congregation any more than I feared the meeting of that man in his own parlor that night. Yet I knew that it was God's work, and remembered the Master's promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." I knew that meant me that night.

At the end of two hours and a half, after we had gone over each step carefully, using the New Testament as our foundation and guide, I asked Mr. C. if he was willing to take the steps which I had pointed out, and if we should bow before God and ask his help.

He said, "I will think about this matter."

I said, "Mr. C., have you decided to settle the question along the line and in the way we have explained it to-night?"

He said, "I have."

"Since that is true, your surrender to Christ will be easier now than at any future time."

Remembering how often men come to Kadesh-barnea and then turn back into the wilderness, I reinforced the effort and with the most persistent and urgent appeal pleaded with him for twenty minutes more, when he said, "You may pray if you will."

I said, "Mr. C., will you pray for yourself?"

He said, "I will."

When we were through with the prayer I said, "Mr. C., did you pray?"

He said, "I did."

"Well, did Jesus hear and answer you?"

"He will," was the reply.

"You are doubting. Remember what Christ says: 'Therefore I say unto you, What things soever you desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.'"

He saw it in an instant, and exclaimed: "Of course he has heard and answered my prayer. He has promised to hear me, and he is too good to deceive me."

That moment the light of salvation flashed into his soul, for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." He believed and confessed, and the victory was his.

My own soul was filled and thrilled with ecstasy. I felt that I never could think anything too hard for God any more, nor would I ever hesitate to be his messenger again. Before bidding him good-night Mr. C. said, "I want to thank you for the interest you have taken in me."

"The pleasure is mine. I have done nothing more than my duty as a Christian minister."

"Yes," said He, "that may be true, but there are so many who fail to do this kind of work."

I do not believe that anyone had spoken to him about his spiritual condition for a score of years.

We may not all be equally successful in winning men to Christ, but may we not all have the joy of bringing some soul into closer touch with our blessed Saviour and Redeemer?

Dr. Banks uttered a truism when he said, "How many times we impoverish our days, and come to the eventide with a sense of spiritual pauperism, not because we have committed outbreaking sins, but because we have been dull and indifferent to the spiritual opportunities of the day that might have refreshed us and glorified us."

Margaret Sangster's little poem entitled *At Sunset* contains an important suggestion:

"It isn't the thing you do, dear,  
It's the thing you've left undone,  
Which gives you a hit of heartache  
At the setting of the sun.,  
The tender word forgotten,  
The letter you did not write,  
The flower you might have sent, dear,  
Are your haunting ghosts to-night.

"That stone you might have lifted  
Out of a brother's way;  
The bit of heartsome counsel  
You were hurried too much to say;  
The loving touch of the hand, dear,  
The gentle, winsome tone,  
That you had no time or thought for,  
With troubles enough of your own;

"The little act of kindness  
So easily out of mind,  
Those chances to be angels  
Which every mortal finds,—  
They come in the night and silence,  
Each chill, reproachful wraith,  
When hope is faint and flagging,  
And a blight has dropped on faith.

"For life is all too short, dear,  
And sorrow is all too great,  
To suffer our slow compassion  
That tarries until too late;  
And it's not the thing you do, dear,  
It's the thing you leave undone,  
Which gives you the bit of heartache  
At the setting of the sun."

Our friend Mr. C. did what all Christians ought to do, he united with the church. No one can afford to turn a deaf ear to Saint Paul's admonition: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the

Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

When Mr. C. yielded himself to Christ his only child, a daughter, surrendered her life to her Redeemer, and they came into church fellowship together. Many a parent who is anxious about his child's salvation would solve the problem if he himself would come into the fold.

### SOUNDING THE BATTLE CRY ANEW

When the revival season came in the year 1904 the writer felt deeply concerned for the spiritual quickening of the church and for the conversion of sinners. The burden had been upon his heart for several weeks, and it became so heavy that he could scarcely sleep at night. For several days he had meditated and prayed over the matter, trying to discern the mind of the Spirit. He had raised the battle cry and led his church in its revival campaign the two previous winters, and while the number brought to Christ was not large in either of those years, yet the church had been greatly quickened and a goodly number of souls had been converted, including several

substantial business men ; but now the question which confronted him was, "Shall we undertake the third successive revival with the burden of a heavy pastorate, or shall we suggest calling an evangelist?" He knew if the matter should be submitted to the church it would vote to leave it with the pastor.

Finally, without bringing the subject before the official board he got the consent of his mind to undertake the *special* meetings without calling to his aid outside help. That decision having been reached, the meetings were announced and the church urged to give its most hearty support.

The first week passed with a small attendance and but scant interest, so that the first Sabbath of the meeting the pastor was impelled to say some plain things to the church: "You force pastors to import evangelists because you do not support them as loyally as you would a stranger." With tears in his eyes and with a passion for souls, he pleaded with the church to second his efforts in the work, which was at its inception. "For the past two years," he dared to say, "you have not given me the support I had a perfect right to expect of you in revival efforts. You pay me my salary cheerfully, and you very patiently listen

to me preach on the Sabbath, but you do not support the *special meetings* during the week. You do not know whether I can succeed or not. Give me a chance. Come out to the services this week and give the meetings your support, and, God's word for it, there will be results." He said further, "If God has not sent me back to you for the third year to win souls for him, then there has been a serious mistake made in the appointments; I have no mission here."

The vote was put to see how many would attend each service that week. The response was most hearty and the effect electrifying. Business men sought out their unsaved business companions and urged them to attend the meetings, and in some instances appealed to them to accept Christ as their personal Saviour; and often the pastor's way was opened and access was had to the unconverted business men, through the untiring efforts of these men whose hearts were on fire with a new zeal for God and a fresh passion for souls. Need the writer add that the results were the most encouraging that had been achieved by that church for some years? "For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children."

No pastor will ever undertake a revival effort if he waits for all the hindrances to be removed, and for the entire membership to be ready and in good working trim. Dr. J. O. Peck spoke truly when he said: "In revivals the 'church' does no work, but only the individuals who compose it. The church is a vast thicket in which an army of skulkers may hide; yet no individual Christian can escape his responsibility to God; the service which God requires of his children during revivals, in bringing many souls to righteousness, is a test and proof of loyalty to him." Fortunate is the pastor who in these times of spiritual declension can arouse his membership to an enthusiasm in soul-winning.

### CAPTURING A YOUNG BUSINESS MAN FOR CHRIST

In the special revival just adverted to the author had his attention called to a young business man who resided in his part of the city, and he called upon him in his place of business and invited him to attend the services. He promised that he would try, but he did not come, and the pastor called again and had a more extended conversation with him, and

then sent one of the most discreet men of his church to see him. Finally the pastor called once more, and was astonished to have him ask, "Did you send Mr. P. to see me?"

"Why do you ask?"

"O, it was all right, but I did not think he would have had gumption enough to call unless you had sent him. I have been doing business alongside of him for some time, and he has never spoken to me about the church and Christianity before. I declare to you if ever I become a Christian and join the church I will interest myself in unsaved men."

We replied: "You are just the kind of a man we need in the church. Will you not come to the services and decide to seek Christ?"

"Yes, I am coming."

He did come, and was a most earnest listener, but could not be induced to take a public stand for Christ. After he attended the services several evenings we called at his office again and asked for a private interview, for our interest in him increased as we came to know him better. But he said: "Let me alone now; these services are not doing me any harm. I will be glad to come to your home and have a private talk with you by and by,

but I am thinking, and there are some things I must study out for myself."

As the services continued from night to night he seemed more and more interested. Others sought and found the Lord; but still there was no move on the part of Mr. D. Finally, one night an appeal was made for all who were determined to seek the Saviour to rise to their feet, and he rose. At the close of the service the writer sought him out and expressed his gratitude at the stand he had taken, and said, "Won't you go home with me to-night and let us have that talk?"

He said, "It is too late."

"No, it is not too late. We will have till morning if necessary."

"Well, I'll go."

On our way to the parsonage he said: "My wife is not interested; she actually laughs about it, and says she does not know why I want to go to the church and to see that preacher, for she declares I am good enough as I am. But I know I'm not good. I need salvation."

We replied, "It is surprising to know your wife's attitude, but when you become a Christian she will change her mind."

"I truly hope so," he said.

When we entered our home that night I felt God would give us the victory. For more than two hours we sat with the Testament in hand, and tried to lead him to the cross. He told us that his worst and chief fault, as he understood it, was profanity. He said he recognized his need of Christ, for again and again he had tried to refrain from swearing, but, to his own shame, had failed. We declared that the grace of God was just what he needed, for it would take all the profanity out of us.

At last we went to God in prayer, Mr. D. pledging himself to pray for forgiveness and for the witness of the Spirit.

Thank God, we do not have to tell men when they are converted, for we *do not know*. That is one office of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit himself "beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

When we had risen from prayer I said, "How is it, brother?"

He said, "I prayed, but do not feel satisfied."

"Are you sure you are not making a mistake about feeling? Christ says, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh find-

eth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.' Now, Mr. D., I want you to be satisfied, but you observe nothing is said here about feeling, but about asking, knocking, etc. Christ puts our faith to the test."

I turned and read Mark 9. 23: "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." I also read to him Matt. 9. 27, 28. But he seemed unable to take Christ by faith. I read 1 John 5. 10: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." Then I referred to Dr. S. A. Keen's Faith Papers, and tried to encourage him to believe by the light which these Faith Papers reflect on the revealed Word. Dr. Keen said: "The witness of faith is the conscious reception of salvation, the witness of the Holy Spirit is the conscious realization of salvation. A gentleman fell heir very unexpectedly to an immense fortune. He could hardly believe that so much wealth had been bequeathed him. The legal papers were presented to him, and on their testimony he accepted, received the bequest as his own, but could not realize that he was rich, made so in a moment. When, however, he began to handle the mortgages and count the stocks, and control the lands into the possession of

which he had come, then came to him the realization that he was rich; that he was a millionaire. The order of his experience was first the witness of faith; that is, the conscious reception of all this wealth on the testimony of the legal evidence; then followed the conscious realization that he was indeed munificently endowed. So when the soul believes the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word, that is, consciously accepts the heavenly treasure of salvation, it has the witness of faith; it knows that it does receive salvation. But when the preciousness of this pearl of great price, the joy of the possession of this found treasure, the sweetness of saving power received, is consciously realized, it has the witness of the Holy Spirit."

In spite of these explanations Mr. D. did not receive the light; the burden of soul was not lifted. He said, "It is now midnight. I will go and study it out for myself."

He had risen from his seat and turned in the direction of the door. The words of Isaiah occurred to us: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

So we detained him by saying, "Now the fault is with you, Mr. D.; don't go yet. God wants to give you the victory to-night."

John 6. 47 was read: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." "These are Christ's own words," we urged; and handing him the Book asked him to read them himself.

Once more we went upon our knees before the throne of grace; but the witness of the Spirit did not come to him.

We emphasized Saint Paul's words: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." He was again in the act of going, and I began to despair of the victory of which I had felt so confident. But I said, "Mr. D., Jesus Christ says, 'Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire; when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.' "

He exclaimed enthusiastically: "Why didn't you tell me that before! I see it! Believe that I receive it! and I have it! I believe it! and I have it!"

He went home with a new song on his lips, and a hitherto unknown joy in his heart. Again God had honored his word. We forgot

the lateness of the hour, and exulted in and magnified the Lord.

When Mr. D. reached his home he found that his wife had not retired, and his transformation was so complete that deep and pungent conviction seized her heart, and the next evening she rose and asked the prayers of God's people. At the close of the service I greeted her and said: "I appreciate the fact that Saturday will be a busy day for you, but if you would like I shall be glad to come to your home to-morrow and talk with you about your personal relation to Christ."

She replied, "Every day is a busy day with me, but I am sure I shall be pleased to have you come."

As I returned to my home that night I felt exceedingly anxious for her salvation for her own sake. Then, too, I recognized the fact that it would be much easier for her husband to live a Christian life if she surrendered to Christ herself. Knowing that the church under the influence of which she had been reared taught confirmation rather than conversion, I feared that she might imagine that joining the church would be all that would be required of her. Remembering the words of Jesus, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will

draw all men unto me," and also remembering that one office of the Holy Ghost is to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come, "for when he is come he will reprove the world of sin," I felt that no more surely is the "ear adapted to sounds and the eye to light than the soul is adapted to feel the power of Christian suavities."

Dr. Daniel Steele has well said: "Obedience to Christ commends itself to every man's conscience. There is a door to every heart, and our Saviour knows the path to that door. He can awaken the sleeper within by a knock too gentle to destroy freedom. He comes with no sledge hammer. When I am lifted up I will draw (not drag) all men unto me. The drawings of Christ are universal, but not irresistible." The story of the cross has conquered millions of hearts, and was ever new, and we believed that it would conquer this stubborn heart.

I found Mrs. D. ready to receive spiritual instruction. Difficulties had to be cleared away, the plan of human redemption explained, and the necessity of regeneration enforced. Then came the struggle with unbelief, and a sense of unworthiness; but finally the will was subdued and the unbelief was dispelled.

Arm in arm she and her husband united with the church. He in an official capacity is utilizing his splendid business ability in the interest of Christ's kingdom, and she is a joyous, happy Christian. His business associates feel the grip of his consecration, for it is his delight to tell them what great things the Lord has done for him.

## PART V

### Children Won by Personal Effort

IN spite of the instruction and influence of the Sunday school, Junior League, and other organizations for children, where they receive special religious training, many parents are opposed to child conversion. First of all, there is that old prejudice, "They are too young to understand." Then, too, parents are afraid of excitement. We cannot censure parents for being exceedingly cautious. No doubt thousands of children have had their feelings played upon in revival meetings, for "it is easy by excited appeals and pathetic stories to affect children to tears, through their tender sensibilities, and to induce them to take steps toward beginning a Christian life. This may be done year after year without many of them becoming genuine Christians. Meanwhile they are being actually hardened against the real work of the Holy Spirit, and deluded, under the shallow emotionalism of fancied repentance and faith." Indiscreet pastors who have thus dealt with children are culpable in the extreme.

But the first excuse, "They are too young," is not valid. The greatest and most successful of soul-winners have testified to the genuineness of child conversion when the children are properly instructed.

Mr. Spurgeon, who was a careful shepherd of children, and toiled to bring them early to Christ, made this statement some time before his death: "I have excluded from my church forty-two members, but I have never excluded one converted in childhood." Personal, private work among children has great advantages.

1. If mothers have confidence in the pastor they will usually be willing for him to have a private interview with the children, where they would not consent to their attending a public meeting where more or less excitement might obtain.

2. Children can be better instructed alone than in the public congregation.

It has been the custom of the writer to see the mothers and to have an earnest talk with them about their children; and to enforce upon them the necessity of their children's being converted early. In this way he has overcome as far as possible any objection to the personal work. Then he has asked permission to see

the children in the home, and has invited the mothers to be present at the meeting. This conserves two purposes: it dispels prejudices, and it has a tendency to revive the mother so that the child will have a more congenial atmosphere in which to live after accepting Christ.

If children are not reached in a private way through personal methods, multitudes of them will drift out of the Sunday school and go out into the world to live careless, indifferent lives. It is a lamentable fact that many of our church services are destitute of children. The instruction of children is relegated largely to the Sunday school teacher and the superintendents of the children's societies.

How many parents think they have done their whole duty toward their children if they have gotten them ready for Sabbath school, and never think of taking or sending them to the church service. How many children say when they are old enough to attend the preaching service alone, "O, I don't want to go to church, the service is not interesting." And how often have we been grieved to see them, when a little older, drift out of the Sunday school, and from under the influence of Christianity entirely. Is there not room for more patience with children in the public congre-

gation, and should not a more hearty welcome be extended to them? Are not pastors under special obligations to look after these little ones?

Our faithfulness to the lambs of the flock is made a test of our love and loyalty to the Great Shepherd. "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs."

The writer has again and again led children to Christ one by one in the homes of their parents, or in his own home. Frequently the children have been converted and united with the church—always with the consent of the parents—before the father and mother were saved. With these strong incentives brought to bear on non-Christian parents, many of them may be brought to a realization of their need of salvation, and induced to surrender to Christ, who could not be thus influenced were their children not in the fold. In dealing with children he has adopted the same method used in the instruction of adults. He has simplified the instruction so that the child could fully comprehend it.

Children thus brought into the fellowship of the church have been among the most faithful of all who have sought salvation under our influence. Jesus said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

## PART VI

### A Revival Not Absolutely Essential to Soul-Winning

THE writer has seen no work on soul-winning and kindred subjects which has not contemplated the existence of a revival. During the first few years of his ministry he would have been surprised if conversions had been the rule, rather than the exception, in the absence of special meetings. Is not this the experience of the rank and file of pastors to-day?

When we reflect on Dr. Strong's astounding statement, that "less than thirty per cent of our population are regular attendants upon church, that perhaps twenty per cent are irregular attendants, while fully one half of the people of the United States, or more than thirty-two millions, never attend any church services," is it not time to ask in all seriousness, "How may the unchurched masses be brought to Christ?" Can we excuse ourselves by saying that the churches are ever open and if the multitudes do not come they sin against light, we having no further responsibility? Does

not the command of the Master still obtain, "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage"? Does not the shepherd leave the "ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it"? Can we excuse ourselves by having "Decision Day" in our Sunday schools and young people's societies, and by thus securing the conversion of many who are already interested? Who will go out after the multitudes who are not interested?

To quote once more from the late Dr. J. O. Peck: "On the unconverted the regular services of the church have little or no effect. There must come some extraordinary and supernatural power that shall shake their sandy foundations; that shall make conscience quiver under the living pain of personal peril; that shall arouse their sensibilities with the alarm of judgment to come; and that shall move the perverted and stubborn will to yield, utterly and meekly, to the commands of God. Only the power of the Holy Ghost can do this. And the hammer of God's Word that breaks the flinty heart usually smites by the uplifted arm of the Holy Spirit in revival seasons."

That able preacher and beloved man of God whose revivalistic ministry resulted in thou-

sands of conversions, and who during the revival seasons did most efficient personal work, does not seem to have expected large results in soul-winning outside of the regular revival; for, as above stated, "the hammer of God's Word that breaks the flinty heart usually smites by the uplifted arm of the Holy Spirit in revival seasons."

Let us have the revival seasons, by all means, but let us not depend wholly on revivals to bring the masses to Christ. The Holy Ghost does honor the personal effort put forth in Jesus's name outside of "regular revival seasons." The existence of a revival is not absolutely necessary to soul-winning. "Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." God knocks at the door of the human heart and makes the unsaved susceptible to religious influences and leadership, but expects some one who knows God to impart the instruction and lead the individual to Christ.

When Saul of Tarsus was arrested in his mad career and God told him that he was "a chosen vessel" unto him, why was he not con-

verted then and there? He heard and recognized the voice of God, and became an honest inquirer. "Who art thou, Lord?" Why was he led in his blindness and kept in that suffering condition until Ananias could be summoned to his aid? God wanted to honor human agency in the conversion of this great opponent of Christianity. "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth. . . . And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."

There are thousands of men and women who are not thus profoundly convicted, but who would be brought under conviction and into a saved relationship with Christ if intelligent personal work were done in their behalf. It is the firm conviction of the writer that the supreme need of the hour is to get back to

Christ and apostolic methods in soul-winning; and this will most surely bring us face to face with the unsaved individually, in personal effort to lead them to Christ.

Dr. G. C. Lorimer reminds us that the impression has been zealously propagated that the transit of time from the nineteenth century to the twentieth is being ominously marked by the increasing debility and decay of Christianity. This alleged condition of spiritual senility and decrepitude has been hailed with every token of satisfaction by one section of society, and has been equally lamented by the other.

It is not enough for the church and its friends to reply that the religion of the cross is not the only great cause which has come short of the promises made and expectations excited by its character and earlier achievements. That cries of "failure" are heard on every side; that freedom is held up to derision; and that the harsh muttering tones of the anarchist are heard in denunciations against freedom, does not free the church from the implication of failure. The contributions she may make to sociology, the interest she may manifest in municipal reform, and the battle she may wage against the rum traffic may all

be commendable and just what the world has a right to expect of her, but if her efforts stop here she will give the enemies of the cross a tremendous advantage, for her mission is to purify the fountain whence these muddy streams emanate. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."

Surely the mission of the church is to save souls; but how frequently we hear the cry, "We can't!" "Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee" (Jer. 32. 17).

We believe personal evangelism to be our imperative duty, and God will hold us responsible for its performance. Again and again ministers have said to us, "I can't do that kind of work; I have no ability in that direction." During revivals some of these men have said, "We felt handicapped; the unsaved would not attend the services, and while the church was somewhat revived the meeting was not what we had hoped and prayed for." A

few meetings of this character so discourage a pastor of this type that he is afraid to storm the citadel of Satan and is henceforth utterly dependent upon imported ministerial aid.

Again they say, as so many have said, "Revivals, and conversions, too, for that matter, have become things of the past." Is it strange that such men often seek other vocations? Pity it is that more of them do not seek and obtain other employment, for many churches would have been extinct ere this if they had depended for their reinforcement upon the material quarried from the world.

We should not have anyone imagine that we are opposed to evangelists, for we recognize their great worth to the cause of Christ, and no doubt many of them are specially called to this field of labor, having the same scriptural commission as do pastors. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4. 11). But our contention is that every Christian, and especially every preacher, ought to be a soul-winner. Every Methodist minister admitted to the Annual Conference pledges himself that he will "spend and be spent in saving souls." If we would save souls

we must be instrumental in their conversion. Bishop Fowler says, "This is our job."

If each of us would become a personal evangelist the kingdom of Christ would speedily come; for we would not concentrate our entire effort upon a special meeting, but would constantly be on the alert for opportunities to gather sheaves for the great Master of the harvest. During all seasons and in all kinds of weather new recruits would be added to the church, and they would be a perpetual stimulus to it and keep its spirituality fanned into a flame.

When the author was a student in an Eastern university he was appointed as a "supply" to a "student charge" in the New England Conference, and his presiding elder said to him, "This is the hardest charge on my district; possibly you may be able to help the people a little." In six months between fifty and seventy-five new converts had been added to that small, struggling society, and among those reached were a number of heads of families. This work could not have been accomplished had the Lord not honored his personal efforts in winning men.

Out of many incidents that cluster about that work, we give but two. Mother F. was in

her eighty-eighth year. She was a noble character, we were told, but had never been converted. When we talked to her she said: "I have been a Bible reader from early childhood and have prayed, but I never received any answer to my prayers. I have never been converted. I have often wished that I might receive the change of heart and know that my peace was made with my Maker."

We said to her: "Mother F., this is certainly your privilege in Christ Jesus. Do you think you would keep your daughter in suspense so many years without her knowing that you love her, or that you are willing to pardon any offense that she might have committed?"

"No, no, I am sure I could not do that."

"Well, then, surely you cannot suppose our loving heavenly Father could be less compassionate, for he has told us, 'Like as a father pitith his children, so the Lord pitith them that fear him.' The fear mentioned does not mean a servile, but a filial, fear, just like your daughter would fear you, fear to do anything that would grieve you. You believe the Bible?"

"O, certainly; I could not disbelieve that. And it tells me that God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every

day. It also tells me that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

The poor soul was the very picture of despair. We hastened to reply: "Jesus sends out a special invitation to you. Hear him: 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.' This means you, for the Bible comes to us with a personal message. This promise is spoken to you as though you were the only person in the world who needs rest. Now, Mother F., man got away from God by listening to the lies of Satan, and he must get back to him by listening to the truth of Christ, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer."

"I have been hoping he would receive me before I am taken out of this world."

"He will; he has sent me as his messenger to tell you how to come to him now."

After quoting and explaining still more of the reassuring promises left us in the divine record, we presented her case at the throne of grace, while she too pleaded with God to have compassion upon her; and we were not disappointed, for God heard and answered our

prayers. With an unwonted light beaming in her aged face she said, "It is like a great burden lifted off my shoulders."

Her joy was supreme, and her confidence was unshaken. Her peace flowed like a river. We can never forget the expression of gladness that came into her face when we placed our hand on her head in baptism.

The second illustration represents a very different type of character. There lived in the village an "old soldier" who was sixty-eight years old. He had a war record of which any man might be justly proud. He had served his country faithfully for four years, and had gone with Sherman on his famous march "from Atlanta to the sea." Having been over some of the Southern battlefields where our old friend had fought so bravely, we proved to be an interesting visitor. We called a number of times before we could turn his mind from the civil war scenes, but finally one day we ventured to say: "Uncle Eben, you've no doubt been a brave soldier. You were most patriotic and would have given your life as freely as you gave your service if the demand had been made. You were loyal to your captain. He could depend upon you in every emergency. But there is a battle that you

have not yet been brave enough to wage. That is the battle against sin in your own life. Jesus Christ, the great Captain of our salvation, has not been able to depend upon you, although it was his mercy that preserved you in hours of danger and shielded you from the missile of the enemy."

He replied: "I am willing to depend upon my record. It is true I have occasionally drunk liquor, and have indulged in profanity, but these things have injured me, and not my fellow men. I have treated my neighbors as I have wished them to treat me, and I do not think God will cast me off and punish me forever under such circumstances."

"It is not what you believe, but what God's Word teaches us. Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God?"

"Yes, I can't say that I disbelieve it, while there are many things in it that I do not understand, and if a too rigid application were made of some of its teachings I should resent them; yet I do not want to be classed with the infidels."

"Uncle Eben, the Bible condemns you from beginning to end. It lifts up a warning voice against profanity, intoxicants, and neglect. I shall go, and will you please think over your

condition and see whether or not you would be willing to answer to roll call at the judgment in your present condition?"

He was suffering with dropsy, and it did not require a skilled physician to see that death would soon claim him as its victim. We became greatly concerned for him. In a few days we called again and inquired as to the progress he had made, but he still contended that he was willing to be judged according to his record. We suggested that a man might drift into a state of indifference so that he would feel little or no concern about his spiritual condition, and yet his danger be most imminent: Then we told him we should be unusually busy in school, but should not be too busy to remember him three times a day in prayer, and we urged him to think of his spiritual condition ten minutes each day.

God says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." They are destroyed because they will not think. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." So we have done something for a man if we can arrest his attention and get him to think.

We did not ask him to pray, for we knew he would refuse to do it. But we simply

evoked from him a promise that he would devote ten minutes of each day to serious thought about himself and his relation to a future existence. He said, "Yes, since you are interested enough in me to pray for me, surely I ought to be enough interested in myself to devote the little time you suggest in thinking of my condition, and I will do it."

The battle was then more than half won. One week elapsed, and we went to his home and found him in a more serious mood than ever before, and we dared make a bolder request, namely, that he would pray for himself each day. That was a more serious matter, for his life had been a prayerless one from infancy. But we suggested a most simple form of prayer, and he promised to try to pray.

When we returned home at the end of another week, and called upon him, he was ready for the instruction for which these weeks of preparation had fitted him. And thus, step by step, he was led to the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. For when we rose from prayer that November Saturday he had enlisted in the army of Christ, and acknowledged him to be the Captain of his salvation. How often people of his age, who

have neglected their salvation, are forgotten or neglected by us, but not so by the Lord of glory, for he is ready to receive all who will come unto him at any time. "And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive."

Only three months more of life were allotted to this man, who came in at the "eleventh hour." We called on him two days before his demise, when he was so ill that they were not admitting anyone. But he insisted on our being admitted, and to our inquiry, "How are you now, Uncle Eben?" he said, "O, I'm suffering terribly, but it is all right. Jesus is here."

The day of his crowning was a time of supreme victory. He was able to walk the floor in the morning, and shouted, "Glory to God! I'm so glad Jesus is here! What would I do in this hour without him?"

"The King of love my shepherd is,  
Whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am his  
And he is mine forever."

In another pastorate the writer became interested in a business man and his family. The wife and mother was reared in a Methodist home and had made a profession of Christianity when a child, but had failed to join the church. The husband had been brought up under different religious influences, but had never been converted nor had he ever united with the church. Theirs was a most interesting family; a well-regulated home; the children were bright and obedient. We coveted the whole family for Christ. We visited in the home, but indifference to spiritual things seemed to be dominant.

Finally, the eldest girl, who was just blooming into young womanhood, made a confession of Christ. We felt encouraged, for we thought that through her influence the parents might be reached. But, while they seemed glad to have their daughter unite in church fellowship, their own attitude was still that of complete indifference.

More than a year passed, during which time this family did not attend the church. But finally we observed that they were in the congregation, and then we sought the father out in his place of business and told him that we were glad to see him in the church, and to

observe that he evinced so much interest. He replied, "We have become more interested in the church than usual." Then we asked him if he would allow us to come to his home and have a private interview. He very cordially granted the request.

Having seen the wife, we told her of the engagement with her husband, and requested that she plan for the "private interview."

During our conversation, he said that he recognized the fact that he was a great sinner. He declared that appetite for strong drink was his besetting sin. He being a fine business man and always displaying in our presence the manners of a most courteous and refined gentleman, we were greatly astonished to hear him say that he occasionally became intoxicated and was unfitted for business for two or three days at a time. "Again and again," said he, "I resolve to give up strong drink entirely, but I am ashamed to say it, when I would be sober, then I get drunk."

He was reminded that that is the experience of multitudes who are throttled by the demon strong drink, and that his failure was in hitherto depending upon his own strength, the appetite becoming stronger than the will power. "O, if my wife would only club me

when I disgrace myself and family in this way I could stand it better. But she is always the very embodiment of kindness and sympathy, and that breaks me all up."

We replied: "My friend, it is not a clubbing you need, but a new heart. The Lord Jesus Christ is more than a match for all of our appetites and sins, and if we come to him and give him right of way he will give us strength to resist temptation."

We have boundless hope for the man who, even though he has imbruted himself by strong drink, will repent of his sins and accept Jesus Christ as his Saviour. God reaches down exceedingly low to pick up a drunkard, and sometimes purifies him in the furnace of affliction. John B. Gough was lifted out of the very depths of degradation and molded in affliction's furnace. Through his own dissipation Gough's wife and baby went down to the grave, but he was finally rescued by divine grace. More than once he relapsed into the haunts of sin, but God managed to use him in rescuing at least a million of his fellow men before he called him home to glory.

We recalled this and other instances of God's ability and willingness to save men from the power of alcoholism—this tyrant which

has destroyed so many homes, blasted so many fond hopes, wrecked so many lives, and damned so many souls.

In personal evangelism we are forced to reckon with this demon, and were it not for the boundless grace of God we should become utterly discouraged. We should never coddle the drunkard and make him feel that his crime is but a slight infraction of the rules of propriety and therefore an excusable fault. But he should be made to realize that intoxication is a sin with the anathema of society and of the church, and with the curse of the living God resting upon it.

And in dealing with this man we said: "While it is true that you have sinned greatly, it is also true that we have a great Saviour. Paul says, 'But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,' and the only hope for you for time and eternity is to completely abandon yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ and plead his mercy. Have not your past failures convinced you that you need some power stronger than your own to break the coils of this terrible serpent which has fastened itself upon you?"

He was very penitent, and wept over his lost condition. Then we explained the steps to

him, an explanation of which is given in this little volume, which if honestly and intelligently taken always lead to Christ. Finally we came to the point where God alone can help us, and we asked him if he would pray for himself. We do not, as a rule, ask seekers to pray audibly, for in the majority of cases this would embarrass them. They are not used to praying and they would be frightened at their own voice. "Yes," said he, "I will try to pray."

Once more in the stillness of the night, alone with a struggling immortal soul, and in the presence of God, it was our solemn duty and exalted privilege to bear up to the throne of grace, upon the wings of prayer and faith, a brother for whom Christ died. O, how we rejoiced in the declarations of God's Word, and in the promises of his dear Son: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Our own faith claimed these promises for our penitent brother. We have learned that nothing is so

effective in soul-winning as the Word of God. If men can be induced to believe that the Word of God is a special message to them, and true to them, victory is certain in a struggle of this kind. Soon after the prayer was ended, peace which passeth all understanding dawned upon his soul. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." In a few weeks he and his wife came into church fellowship, and are living happy, consistent Christian lives—happy because they are consistent.

The soul-winner will be able to direct men to Christ when great calamities and afflictions come upon them. In the midst of a busy city pastorate the writer was summoned to the home of a family where a little ten-year-old boy was fatally hurt with a "Fourth of July explosive." When he reached the room he saw that the child was so badly mangled and terribly mutilated about the head and face that death would be preferable to recovery. The parents' hearts were breaking, and for a few moments he could do and say nothing, for he was overcome in sympathy with their grief. The little child was a member of his Sunday school and the mother was a member of his church.

Finally the writer was able to say to the father: "This is a hard blow that has come to you, and I can only commend you to the precious Saviour, who alone can help you. Jesus Christ is the great burden-bearer and we are invited to lay our burdens at the feet of Jesus —'Casting all your care upon him, for he car-  
eth for you.'"

The poor man sobbed out: "I feel that God has sent this affliction upon me because of my wickedness. I have often promised him I would live a better life, but I have neglected to do it."

That was Sunday afternoon, and before midnight the death angel had wafted the spirit of little Frank to the bosom of Christ, and in the midst of this great sorrow the father yielded himself to the Lord Jesus, and as a member of the church he has lived above reproach, and his actions have never been called in question.

I cannot believe that God permitted the accident that resulted in the death of that innocent child on purpose to bring the father to repentance, but it is certain that God did use the affliction to his glory in bringing this man to a realization of his lost condition, and to a genuine repentance which resulted in his

salvation. Paul says, "And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost."

Many a man has developed Godlikeness in the crucible of affliction. Dr. Wharton, of Baltimore, gives a striking illustration of this in the life of Todd Hall, a detective. For years he was a very sinful man. Once when Mr. Moody was holding meetings Todd Hall was detailed to arrest a certain man, and as he was looking for him some one said, "Todd, the man's gone down into the Moody meeting."

So Mr. Hall went to where the meetings were held, and, as he entered, the usher said, "Yes, he is in the building, but he's away down near the front."

So they ushered Todd Hall down the center aisle, and just as he walked down the aisle something which Mr. Moody said sent conviction into his heart, and his attention was arrested and riveted on the preacher. He sat down and listened. The service being ended, the people passed out; the man whom he was to arrest went out with them. Todd Hall kept his seat, and one of the ushers came and said to him, "What do you think of D. L. Moody?"

"O," he said, "I wish I could be a Christian."

The usher, being a consecrated Christian, said, "Kneel down and I will pray with you."

Both knelt and prayed, and Mr. Hall was converted. He went home and told his wife, and she said: "Todd, I have waited many a day for this happy moment. I'll go with you into the church." And their little daughter said, "I will go, too. Won't it be nice, papa, for us all to join the church together?"

The three went into the church, and Mr. Hall became a preacher and wielded a marvelous power over his former companions.

Dr. Wharton said that when he went back to Baltimore from an evangelistic campaign one of the first friends to meet him said, "Todd Hall's little girl is dead." And he said, "How has it affected his power?" He replied: "O, you ought to see him and hear him now. When the doctor said, 'Mr. Hall, your little girl is dying,' he just knelt down and said this: 'Dear, blessed Jesus, you gave her to me, and you have loved her, and you have saved her, and now I give her back to thee;' and then, holding her hand and looking up, he began to sing:

"Bear her away on your snowy wings,  
To her eternal home."

Dr. Wharton continued: "And she was gone. Todd Hall never knew what it was to work for God before. He rose from his knees and came out, from his affliction transfigured with the power of God, and was burnished and purified in this crucible of affliction so that he preached with an unwonted power."

Does the reader ask, "Do you never fail in your personal efforts to win men to Christ?" We answer, "Yes." No man will be blessed with uninterrupted success. The soul-winner must ever strive to succeed, but be prepared for an occasional defeat. Christ himself was not always successful, for we read, "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

The Master knew that his disciples would be repulsed and rejected, and he left instructions for their guidance: "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet."

The writer has succeeded from the very first

in winning nine tenths of all those who have granted a personal interview, and with greater experience he loses a much smaller per cent than that. In the absence of a revival, he has witnessed from one to four conversions in a single week, of persons who have been brought to Christ through the method defined in this book. It is his firm conviction that it is possible for every pastor to average at least one conversion per week if he would get the importance of this work upon his mind until it burns itself into his very soul.

Is it not true that many a pastor exhausts the opportunity afforded by a pastoral call in either listening to or indulging in gossip? How can we talk and laugh with ungodly men and women and never say a single word to them about their spiritual welfare?

Let us not be afraid of giving offense. Intelligent people appreciate any effort put forth in their interest, even though they may not yield themselves to Christ; and we would better offend a few persons than to allow many whom we might win to go down to ruin because we are indifferent. We need to reflect upon this admonition: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to

feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

How often professed Christians return from a social call made in the home of a non-Christian friend without that friend being able to detect by a single utterance the fact that they belong to Christ! We are not pleading for a namby-pamby piety which would repulse intelligent people, but we do plead for an earnest, godlike piety that will impress preachers and laymen everywhere with the importance of being about "our Father's business." So surely as the love of Christ constrains us, we will follow in the footsteps of our blessed Saviour, "who went about doing good."

A Scotch shepherd counted his sheep, and found that there were three missing. He went to the kennel where the shepherd dog lay with her little ones. He pointed to the woods, and then to the dog, and said, "Three sheep are gone. Go." She looked at him a moment, and then at her babies; then she was lost in the darkness. One hour passed, and then two, when she came in bringing two of the sheep which were lost.

Again the shepherd counted his sheep, and found that one was still missing. Once more he stood at the door of the kennel and said,

"One sheep is still missing. Go." She looked with mute despair into his face and then upon her little ones, and again she was lost in the woods. One hour, then two, and then three passed, and finally the shepherd dog came back, beaten by the wolves, pierced by the thorns, and bruised by the stones, but she had the sheep which was lost. The shepherd took the sheep and wrapped it in his plaid and placed it in the fold, while the poor dog staggered to the door of the kennel and fell dead.

O, if that poor dumb brute with no hope of reward, no hope of heaven, but because of the little flickering love it had for its master, would give its life for the sheep, how is it that we can sit idly by when our blessed Master, who has promised eternal life and heaven, stands with nail-pierced palms extended toward a world lost in sin, saying, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"? How is it that we can gaze upon his bleeding brow, and fail to obey him?

"I gave my life for thee,  
My precious blood I shed,  
That thou might'st ransomed be,  
And quickened from the dead.  
I gave, I gave my life for thee;  
What hast thou given for me?"

## PART VII

### Preparation for Soul-Winning

THE Methodist Discipline, under the clause "Pastoral Fidelity," says: "In ourselves there is much dullness and laziness, so that there will be much ado to get us to be faithful in the work. We have a base, man-pleasing temper, so that we let people perish rather than lose their love; we let them go quietly to hell lest we should offend them." If this be true of those who have felt, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel," is it not more likely to be a characteristic of the rank and file of God's professed followers?

i. We need wisdom. "He that winneth souls is wise." How often we hear good people say: "I can't win men to Christ. I am interested in them, and I love God and am determined to be loyal to Christ, but I do not know how to influence the unsaved to yield themselves to Christ." "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Since God depends upon hu-

man agency in the propagation of the doctrine of Christ and in the establishment of a world empire, it is his delight to impart all necessary wisdom, in qualifying us for this God-given task of soul-winning.

2. We must have faith. To become a soul-winner requires a mighty faith—faith in God's Word; faith in his willingness to use us in the salvation of men. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," and this is the confidence that we have in him: "That if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." Coupled with faith there must be an all-consuming passion for souls such as characterized John Knox, who spent whole nights in prayer crying, "O God, give me Scotland or I die." We should have a faith such as dominated the soul of Bishop William Taylor and such as characterizes Bishop Thoburn. No one will ever succeed as a soul-winner without a mighty faith in God, and in himself as God's messenger. But we must remember that "faith without works is dead."

Finally, the soul-winner must be spirit-filled. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." "But ye shall receive power, after

that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." We must not, we dare not, pray God to send the Holy Ghost upon us to do for us what we are unwilling to do for ourselves. How many church members there are who pray for a baptism of the Holy Spirit, that they may feel happy, and in the language of the late J. Clarke Hagey, D.D., "How many souls have deluded themselves into the belief that because with eyes closed to all else they have dreamed of palms and thrones and songs, of robes and crowns and harps, that they are ripening for the kingdom of light and glory! The wages will be paid at the end of the day, not to him who sat in the shady arbors partaking of the luscious clusters, but to him who has wrought in the vineyard, whether that work be commenced in the morning or evening of life's decay." How often ministers of the gospel pray for the infilling of the Spirit, that they may have power in preaching! So long as this is the primary motive, we will pray for the fullness of power in vain. God only

anoints for service; and he does not send the Holy Ghost to do for us that which we may do for ourselves. But when God sees that we are ready to follow the divine Christ in seeking the lost he will, in answer to prayer and in response to a complete consecration, send the Holy Spirit in all of his fullness into our hearts and lives.

"Come, Holy Ghost, all-quicken fire,  
My consecrated heart inspire,  
Sprinkled with the atoning blood:  
Still to my soul thyself reveal:  
Thy mighty working may I feel,  
And know that I am one with God."

